

Mobile Homes in the National Income and Product Accounts

PRIVATE purchases of mobile homes are treated in the national income and product accounts as purchases of transportation equipment. Most mobile home purchases are assumed to be for consumer use and these are classified as personal consumption expenditures. The small share assumed to be purchased for rental or other business uses is classified as producers' durable equipment. Until recent years, this procedure seemed reasonably satisfactory, since "mobile home" units were not easily distinguished from recreational vehicles, which are quite clearly consumer durables, and since the amounts of national output involved were small. In recent years, however, mobile homes have become increasingly important as permanent residences and output has grown rapidly, and it has become clear that these units should be treated in the national accounts in the same way as conventionally constructed housing units.

To do this, it is necessary to develop estimates of the amount of installed furniture and appliances purchased as part of mobile home units, and of capital consumption, rent, and related measures. BEA is developing these estimates so that the treatment of mobile homes can be changed in the next benchmark revision of the national income and product accounts. In the interim, a new table 5.8 is included in the national income and product tables in this issue of the Survey, giving the value of mobile home purchases in current and constant dollars now included in personal consumption expenditures and in producers' durable equipment. Table 5.8 gives annual and quarterly estimates for 1968-71. Table A, shown here, provides annual and quarterly estimates in current dollars for 1947-68. Because of space constraints, the summary income and product tables published each month in the Survey will show only the current dollar value of private purchases of mobile homes included in personal consumption expenditures; these will be shown in table 11. Users interested in additional quarterly data should

contact BEA's National Income and Wealth Division.

The current dollar estimates of mobile home output are calculated from data on the number of units shipped and on average retail prices as estimated by BEA. Ninety percent of the total is allocated to personal consumption expenditures and 10 percent to investment in producers' durables.

In the past, no specific deflator was developed for mobile homes, and the current dollar estimates were deflated with the GNP deflator for new cars. This is clearly a crude method, and the results of using it cannot be taken as meaningful constant dollar estimates of mobile home purchases; for this reason, historical data in constant dollars are

not shown in table A. Users who want to identify the amount of mobile home purchases implicit in the constant dollar accounts for 1947-68 should contact BEA's National Income and Wealth Division. BEA is engaged in research to develop a suitable deflator. The most promising approach appears to be to develop a price index for mobile homes based on factory prices adjusted for dealers' margins, transportation charges, and sales taxes. Because this index seems superior, a preliminary version of it was used to deflate the estimates for 1969-71; the resulting constant dollar figures as shown in table 5.8 have been linked to the level of the existing implicit estimate for 1968. That 1968 estimate, shown in table 5.8, was deflated by the old method, i.e., with the new car deflator.

Table A.—Private Purchases of Mobile Homes
(Billions of dollars)

	Total	Personal consumption expenditures	Producers' durable equipment		Total	Personal consumption expenditures	Producers' durable equipment
Seasonally adjusted at annual rates							
1947.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	1955: I.....	0.4	0.4	0.0
1948.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	II.....	0.4	0.4	0.0
1949.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	III.....	0.4	0.4	0.0
1950.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	IV.....	0.4	0.4	0.0
1951.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	1956: I.....	0.5	0.5	0.0
1952.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	II.....	0.5	0.5	0.0
1953.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	III.....	0.5	0.5	0.0
1954.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	IV.....	0.5	0.5	0.0
1955.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	1957: I.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
1956.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	II.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
1957.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	III.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
1958.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	IV.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
1959.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	1958: I.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
1960.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	II.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
1961.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	III.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
1962.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	IV.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
1963.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	1959: I.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
1964.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	II.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
1965.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	III.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
1966.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	IV.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
1967.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	1960: I.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
1968.....	0.3	0.2	0.0	II.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
Seasonally adjusted at annual rates							
1947: I.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	1961: I.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
II.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	II.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
III.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	III.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
IV.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	IV.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
1948: I.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	1962: I.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
II.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	II.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
III.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	III.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
IV.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	IV.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
1949: I.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	1963: I.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
II.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	II.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
III.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	III.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
IV.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	IV.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
1950: I.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	1964: I.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
II.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	II.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
III.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	III.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
IV.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	IV.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
1951: I.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	1965: I.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
II.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	II.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
III.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	III.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
IV.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	IV.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
1952: I.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	1966: I.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
II.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	II.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
III.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	III.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
IV.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	IV.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
1953: I.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	1967: I.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
II.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	II.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
III.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	III.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
IV.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	IV.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
1954: I.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	1968: I.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
II.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	II.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
III.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	III.....	0.6	0.6	0.0
IV.....	0.2	0.2	0.0	IV.....	0.6	0.6	0.0